

Message Text

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15

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 SAM-01 NIC-01 SAJ-01 DRC-01 /105 W

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R 090700Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6733

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, CZ

SUBJECT: CHANGES IN CZECHOSLOVAK PRESS COVERAGE OF WATERGATE
AFFAIR

1. ALTHOUGH IN LAST MONTH SEVERAL PRAGUE AND COUNTRYWIDE
NEWSPAPERS HAVE PRINTED BRIEF FACTUAL ARTICLES ON WHAT IS
HAPPENING IN THE WATERGATE AFFAIR, THE AUGUST 7 BRATISLAVA
"PRAVDA" (SLOVAK CP ORGAN) AND PRAGUE'S PEOPLE'S PARTY
"LIDOVA DEMOKRACIE" OF AUGUST 8 TAKE A QUANTITATIVE AND
QUALITATIVE STEP FORWARD IN THEIR WATERGATE COVERAGE.

2. LIKE PRAVDA PIECE, LD ARTICLE IS SIGNIFICANTLY LONGER,
GOING INTO RATHER GREAT DETAIL, FACTUALLY, TO INFORM READERS
ABOUT CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS FOR IMPEACHMENT, WHAT LEGAL
STEPS HAVE ALREADY BEEN TAKEN, AND WHAT YET MUST HAPPEN

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IN CONGRESS BEFORE AN INCUMBENT PRESIDENT CAN BE

LEGALLY REMOVED FROM OFFICE. THERE IS MENTION OF THE TRIALS
DUE FOR "TWENTY OF PRESIDENT NIXON'S CLOSEST ADVISORS,"
SOME OF WHOM AWAIT JUDGMENT, SOME OF WHOM HAVE
BEEN FOUND GUILTY.

3. UNLIKE LONG AND FACTUALLY ACCURATE PRAVDA ARTICLE, LD STORY
CONCLUDES WITH A PARAGRAPH WHOSE TONE IS AT SHARP VARIANCE
WITH REST OF PIECE. IT ASSERTS THAT FORCES UNSYMPATHETIC TO
LESSENING WORLD TENSION AND CONCOMMITANT IMPROVEMENT IN
US-USSR RELATIONS ARE BEHIND PRESIDENT NIXON'S PROBLEMS.

4. CLEARLY, THESE TWO ARTICLES ARE DESIGNED TO CLUE IN THE
AVERAGE CITIZEN AS TO HOW AND WHY PRESIDENT NIXON MAY NOT
COMPLETE FULL TERM OF OFFICE. LD EXPECIALLY IS CONSIDERED
BY PEOPLE IN BOHEMIA AND MORAVIA TO BE A FAIRLY DECENT
SOURCE OF NEWS (AS SOURCES GO HERE) AND AS A RESULT IS VERY
POPULAR. PRAVDA APPARENTLY IS THE ONLY SLOVAK NEWSPAPER READILY
AVAILABLE THROUGHOUT SLOVAKIA, WHICH MAY EXPLAIN ITS USE AS THE
MEDIUM TO GET THE MESSAGE OUT THERE.

5. THAT THE WORD IS BEING DISSEMINATED OF PRESIDENT NIXON'S
SITUATION THERE CAN BE LITTLE DOUBT: THE LD ARITCLE STATES,
IN ITS DESCRIPTION OF THE HOUSE ROLE IN IMPEACHMENT, THAT
THE PRESIDENT'S IMPEACHMENT IS IN FACT "PROBABLE." THE LD REFERENCE
TO ANTI-DETENTE FORCES PROBABLY IS THERE AS A REFLECTION OF THE
PAPER'S FAITHFULNESS TO CURRENT DOCTRINE, AN ACT OF PIETY PRAVDA
NEED NOT PERFORM.

6. INFORMAL SOUNDINGS BY EMBOFF INDICATE A HIGH DEGREE OF KNOWLEDGE
AMONG PRAGUE CITIZENS ABOUT WATERGATE. FROM THEIR COMMENTS
WHICH EVIDENCE A RATHER LONG-TERM ACQUAINTANCE
WITH WATERGATE, HOWEVER, ONE GETS THE IMPRESSION THAT THEY
HAVE BEEN FOLLOWING THE NEWS ON REGULAR AM RADIO FROM GERMANY,
FRANCE AND AUSTRIA, WHOSE DOMESTIC RADIO BRAODCASTS REACH
ACROSS CZECHOSLOVAKIA AS SOON AS THE SUN SETS. PERHAPS
CZECHOSLOVAKIA'S NEWSPAPAERS ARE NOW TRYING TO CATCH UP, AND
PRESENT FULLER STORY OF WHERE IMPEACHMENT SITUATION REALLY STANDS.
PERRY

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